

LIES, SECRETS, AND LOVE: THE INADEQUACY OF CONTEMPORARY MORAL PHILOSOPHY

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I realized that when you love you must either in your reasoning about that love, start from what is higher, more important than happiness or unhappiness, sin or virtue in their usual meaning, or you must not reason at all.

Chekhov¹

Contemporary discussions of moral problems and moral theory, at least as they occur in English, almost without exception involve appeals to one of two positions – either to the view that our moral obligations consist in maximizing value, where this is usually understood as promoting the general welfare or producing “the greatest good of the greatest number,” or else to the view that there are basic rights which override considerations of value and which are held by everyone, or at least everyone in a certain position. In the first, or utilitarian case, moral obligation is based on the objective value of certain states such as happiness and well-being, and in the second, or deontological case, obligation is based on abstract formal principles such as universalization and equal liberty.

Most contemporary moral philosophers have opted for one or the other of these views as providing a comprehensive and systematic account of morality.² Occasionally a philosopher has thought that one must have both and has tried to combine them.³ But all of these approaches seem to me to be serious mistakes. Neither utilitarianism nor deontology, whether singly or taken together, can provide the basis for an adequate moral theory and it will be the point of this paper to show why.

What is not realized is that utilitarianism and deontology share the same essential conception of morality even though they are usually in conflict. For both types of theory, the character of morality is to harmonize the di-

¹ Anton Chekhov, “About Love”, in *The Portable Chekhov*, ed., Avrahm Yarmolinsky (Viking Press; New York, 1947), p. 395.

² In the broad senses in which I have used these terms, contemporary utilitarians include G. E. Moore, J. J. C. Smart, and Jan Narveson; deontologists include W. D. Ross, R. M. Hare, Marcus Singer, and John Rawls.

³ William Frankena has attempted this in his little book *Ethics* (Prentice-Hall; Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963).

verse interests and needs of people into one rational whole to which everyone can agree. Whether this is done by the device of maximizing value or by that of universalizing rights is of secondary importance. What is always central is that morality consists in the recognition and pursuit of something which is shareable and that this sharing resolves the conflicts among men and unites them in a common enterprise.

This emphasis on harmony is a structural part of these theories and cannot be eliminated without radically changing their character. It is also their chief flaw, for because of it they are unable to include in their accounts certain moral relationships and considerations which necessarily promote conditions of disharmony – namely, those originating from love. This means not only that contemporary moral philosophy as it is now constituted lacks an adequate theoretical account of morality, but also that it can achieve such an account only by abandoning its utilitarian-deontological bias.

I was first led to this conclusion by the rather indirect route of noting that certain disharmonious relationships – those of lying and sharing secrets – had a positive moral character. That this should be so is contrary to what we have traditionally been taught, and in reflecting on this fact, I came to see that a rather large and important class of human relationships shared these same features. Since it is the moral character of these relationships that provides the evidence for my argument, I will begin with these reflections on lying, having and keeping secrets, and being in love with someone else. They will be presented in Sections 1-3 and, incomplete and fragmentary as they may be, will show that these relationships indeed promote a condition of disharmony and will thus provide the backing for the central thesis of this paper. The argument will continue in Section 4 with the claim that the relationships and considerations in question are genuinely moral ones and of such significance that any adequate moral theory must take them into account. The next three sections will then discuss the main thesis that utilitarian and deontological theories share the same conception of morality and as a consequence cannot account for the moral character of lies, secrets, and love, while the final section will consider some of the implications of this fact for moral philosophy in general.

I

We are accustomed to think that lying has no positive moral significance. Lying is wrong and something which ought not to be done. The most that can be allowed is that it can be morally necessary as the lesser of two evils because it occasionally enables a person to avoid something which is morally worse. This suggests that it should be possible in principle completely to eliminate lying from human affairs without any moral loss. Indeed, the world should then be a morally better place because closer to the way it ought to be. This follows directly from the claim that lying is always wrong except when required to avoid a greater evil, for this means that if we could construct or imagine a world in which these greater evils had been independently

controlled, lying would become unnecessary and clearly without moral justification.

However, when we perform this thought experiment, we discover that lying and deceit cannot so easily be eliminated from the moral picture. The capacity to lie is more fundamental to human existence than moral tradition has supposed. Indeed, unless an individual is able to lie, he is not yet a moral agent, that is, a person who is morally responsible and a proper subject of moral considerations. This is because an essential aspect of such accountability is autonomy.

Autonomy is the condition of self-control and self-direction. When it is achieved, a person is a conscious center of value and action. He can deliberate and decide for himself, and his behavior is not controlled, either directly or psychologically, by the desires of others. The moving principles of his actions, to use Aristotle's phrase, rest in him. Only when a person achieves such autonomy and acts with a sense of independence from the will and choices of others can he be held morally accountable for what he does.

Essential to autonomy in this sense is the complex awareness of oneself as a person apart from other persons and of others as persons who lack sufficient power to control one. Being able to lie is a fundamental form of this awareness. When one lies and gets away with it, one demonstrates both one's separateness from the other and one's independence of will and values.

With respect to the young child, for instance, the perception of himself as an autonomous person will not be achieved as long as he believes adults know everything he thinks and plans to do. This is an ability children commonly ascribe to grown-ups and such a belief renders the child ineffectual when confronted with them and unable to have a life of his own. However, once the child learns to lie successfully, this power over him is broken and he realizes for the first time that he is an independent agent able to form the world in accordance with his own ideas.⁴

The point is not that lying is an activity which is instrumental for a certain stage of human development and afterwards dispensable. The capacity to lie, once attained, must remain as a structural part of autonomy. This is because self-control requires non-control by others which in turn requires the ability to control them if necessary. If one cannot assert one's self, one cannot be an agent who is morally responsible. Thus, we should not want to eliminate lying even if we could.

II

It might be thought that the above conclusion is not accurate and that lying itself can be eliminated as long as the capacity to lie is preserved. Even

⁴ I am indebted for this point to R. D. Laing. See *The Divided Self* (Penguin Books; Baltimore, Md., 1965), p. 37.

in the case of children, there are other ways of recognizing independence than deceit.

This objection is perhaps technically correct. Perhaps it is possible to have the capacity to lie without ever having lied oneself, or been lied to, or seen others lie, and perhaps deceit is not involved in the other forms of independence (though this is doubtful). But if so, it misses the more basic point that autonomy is a form of separation from others that requires *some* actions which are disharmonious in character in order to be achieved and maintained. Without such successful opposition there will be no sense to the notions that an action or project is *my* choice, *my* will, and *my* responsibility.

Furthermore, this connection with autonomy is only one of the positive moral aspects of deceit. If we consider secrets, we shall see that the same features of disharmony are present and that they are connected with friendship and love.

The mere having of a secret with another almost always involves deception. One must lie to third parties and pretend that there is no secret in order not to give it away. But it is also the case that sometimes one must lie even to the person with whom one has the secret. This happens when a third party is closer and more important to one than he with whom the secret is held. Then one must share one's secret and tell what one has pledged not to reveal. This is quite literally to break a promise and to do so for reasons that are generally excluded as inapplicable and insufficient. One must therefore deny that one has done it, and, if finally discovered, can justly be accused of having lied and broken one's word.

Of course, it is not always a breach of faith to share a secret. The rules governing the keeping of secrets are complicated and many times secrets are created with the tacit understanding that they are not *really* secrets or not *that* secret. This usually means that it is understood that they may be shared with a certain class of persons such as spouses, confidential friends, or business associates, and that this much is not a breach of confidence. This latitude, however, is limited, and there is always another class with respect to whom the secret is really meant to be a secret. These may be persons who are strangers, casual acquaintances, non-family, business competitors, servants, reporters, students, or junior faculty. If one reveals the secret to them, one has violated one's pledge, and if one does so out of love or friendship, one has violated it unjustly.

Still, sharing a secret when it is forbidden to do so may serve a special moral purpose. Relations of love and friendship vary in closeness and importance and thus form concentric and hierarchical patterns (though these are seldom neat and precise). Within one's group of acquaintances many will be casual while others are close friends, and of the latter only a few or even one may be a confidant or lover. With respect to an "outer" group, an "inner" one is always a "we" related to a "they." Sharing secrets is one means of creating and sustaining this "we-ness." It both separates persons that before were in some way united so that one party becomes a "they" and at the same time bonds together more securely persons whose relation-

ship was less close or called into question by the original secret, insuring that they are a "we." One does not normally share one's secrets with persons who are not as close as the one with whom the secret is made, but one does share one's secrets with those who are closer, more important to one, and "bosom" friends or lovers.

Sharing secrets in this sense has at least two moral aspects that should be recognized. The first is that while it involves breaking moral bonds and violating moral trusts, it at the same time creates or secures different moral bonds and moral relationships – those of friendship and love. And the second is that it can be required of one as a result of these moral relationships if they already exist. When the latter happens, one is presented with a moral requirement to be unfaithful and perhaps to lie as well, that is, to be unjust rather than deny one's friendship or love.

As an illustration of these points, consider the kind of case where one finds oneself in a position of authority over someone with whom one is close and intimate. Sometimes in this situation it is necessary to deliberate about that person regarding such things as a promotion or the awarding of a prize. These discussions are confidential and the decisions arrived at are to be kept secret until officially announced. Everyone understands this and has tacitly accepted such obligations. Yet in spite of this, friendship typically requires that the professional and collegial confidences be violated, and that one be improper and tell one's friend what concerns him. To keep it from him, except under the most extreme situations, will be to alter that friendship in the direction of an ordinary acquaintance. Nonsharing separates and pushes the other away, toward an outer circle. In such circumstances, friendship demands that one place personal bonds above more formal ones. This means that "Why didn't you tell me?" is always both a legitimate question and a reproach among friends. If the friendship is not to be jeopardized, it must be answered either by an excuse which cites more than the fact that there was a secret involved or else by remorse and a seeking of forgiveness. Even if the actual content of the secret should be trivial and of no consequence, the refusal to share it is not trivial. Part of the structure of friendship is just such sharings.

There is no way to avoid this choosing of "us" and "them," and no matter what one does one will create or reinforce a bond which depends upon the separation rather than the joining of persons. Friendship, though it is a moral relationship, is one which in actuality rests upon disharmony.

III

What is most overlooked about love, at least in moral discussions, is that it is by nature divisive. In this respect, friendship is not a special kind of love but typical. This is because love is a form of closeness which requires that most persons count as "other" and "them." Being separated in one's interpersonal relations between "us" and "them" is necessitated by the very structure of loving another person and hence is not a means to that relation-

ship which can ultimately be eliminated. Without this separation, love would not exist. One cannot love everyone equally with one's wife, for instance, and still be said to love her. Similarly, the man who loves his children will be partial to them and will not give their inheritance to strangers. Love makes one person close and tightly bound to one, but it pushes all others away and keeps them, their interests, and their well-being at a moral distance.

For love to grow and flourish, lovers must also be autonomous and have a life of their own. Essential to this autonomy is privacy. There must be matters which are their business and their business alone. Without these secrets, lovers will lack a firm mutual identity and will lose the sense of themselves as special persons united by bonds that apply to no one else. This means that others must be excluded. If, for instance, they inquire into these private things, they will be given harmless pleasantries ("Oh yes, we're getting along fine"), lied to ("No, Mother, there is no problem"), or finally told to mind their own business.

The moral effect produced by love is, therefore, one of disharmony rather than harmony. Furthermore, the lovers' unity is in part created out of secrets and deceptions. It is a form of trust in which other trusts must be broken, and a form of secrecy in which other secrets must be violated. Love, in a fundamental sense, is a form of mutual honesty that rests on falsehoods. Because of this, it is a mistake, or at least a wrong use of terms, to think that what the world needs to solve its social problems is love. St. Paul recognized this fact when he replaced love with charity as the third Christian virtue, and so did Kant when he insisted that it is not love that we owe our fellow men but respect.

IV

The preceding reflections are fragmentary and do not approach a full analysis of the subjects considered. Still, they are sufficient for the thesis of this paper, for they make it clear that there are certain relationships and considerations which cannot properly be characterized as promoting the goal of harmony. What they show is that friendship and love separate persons by giving some individuals a greater value than others, and that to maintain such divisions and achieve a degree of autonomy for the friendship and love involved, various forms of deceit are needed. The result is that lying and having secrets forms part of the character of love and friendship and that the affirmation of such relationships is therefore often done at the moral expense of others.

The critic, however, might reply that this analysis is too hasty in its claim that these cases are relevant to moral theory. To be sure, the discussion does show that love and friendship are divisive and sources of disharmony, but this in itself is not enough. What it must also show is that these are moral relationships and this has not been done nor is it immediately obvious from the cases themselves. If it should turn out that love and friendship are correctly put into the category of non-moral values and considerations, then

not only will they cease to present any problem for utilitarian or deontological accounts of morality, this fact will also explain why such theories have failed to accord them any significance.

The issue raised here is one of great difficulty. Many authors have tried to define morality in terms of form or content, and even some combination of the two, but no account that is generally satisfying has been given. This makes all attempts to distinguish the moral from the non-moral both contentious and subject to the bias of one's substantive moral beliefs. Nonetheless, there are some things that can be said in reply which go beyond begging the question and which should prove convincing.

If one is to maintain, as the critic suggests, that the relationships of love and friendship are not moral in nature, then one must also hold either that these relationships are of no great importance or else that morality is not concerned with everything of importance in human affairs. Both these alternatives, however, are implausible.

With regard to the first, there can be no doubt that love and friendship are among the most important elements in our lives. We can see this everywhere – in our desires and motives, in the priorities we allow into our lives, and in our dreams and ideals. As for the second, morality has as its subject matter those things which are important in life and its business is to teach us how to discover and secure them. It would be paradoxical to allow that something was important and yet also maintain that it lacked any moral value or significance, for how could it have such importance if it were not relevant to our decisions and choices or if it could not in its own right provide reasons that outweighed even minor moral considerations?

It follows, therefore, that both alternatives are to be rejected and that the critic's position is unsound. This means that the requirements created by friendship and love are moral ones and must be taken into account before any moral theory can correctly tell a person what he ought to do. If this is not done, something of importance will have been omitted and the theory's judgments will not be well-founded. At best, they will have a restricted or perhaps tentative validity, while at worst, they will be wrong.

This also means that there are moral relationships and considerations which do not have harmony as their goal. This establishes the first stage of the argument. What must now be shown is that this fact is critical and that because of it neither utilitarian nor deontological theories can include love and friendship in their systems of moral reasons without distorting their moral character.

V

It is unusual to regard utilitarianism and deontology as instances of the same conception of morality. Ordinarily, they appear so different as to be irreconcilable. This impression, however, is caused more by the position from which they are considered than by their actual character. The normal theoretical view point is itself utilitarian or deontological, or at least one

which accepts this opposition as virtually exhaustive of the moral possibilities. It is then natural to think of these as necessarily alternatives and to consider their differences as central. But if this perspective is changed and another alternative which is opposed to both is introduced, it will be possible to view them differently and to consider new features as critical.

Thus, once it is accepted that love is an important moral relationship which requires various forms of deceit and which emphasizes a particular disunion among men, it will become more and more apparent that utilitarianism and deontology have a common moral outlook which is fundamentally opposed to that provided by love. All utilitarian and deontological theories will be seen to share certain features that the requirements and considerations founded in love lack. I have characterized these features by saying that they have as their moral point a harmony among men. What is meant by this is that each of these theories promotes a set of goods which are intended to be shared as ends by everyone. As a result, there is to be, on the intellectual level, rational agreement among persons as to both what ought to be done and what each person ought to do and, on the practical level, actual cooperation in the securing of these ends.

There is little difficulty in seeing that this characterization applies to utilitarianism, for on that theory moral obligation is based on the objective goodness of states such as happiness and well-being. These are impersonally, or non-relatively, valuable. They have value in themselves and hence represent goods which are shareable by everyone and which, indeed, everyone has an obligation to bring about by cooperating with everyone else. This cooperation may involve different tasks and even different roles which can come into conflict with each other, but these will always be justified as a complex means to the single moral end of maximizing goodness.

With deontology, however, this is not so clear, for this kind of theory is not teleological in nature. According to it, morality does not consist in promoting a set of ends or goods, but in following certain rules. Rightness is not a matter of producing the greatest amount of goodness but rather of respecting certain fundamental rights, most of which can be seen to be grounded in such rational principles as universalization and equal liberty. Nonetheless, embodied in these rights and rules is an end or state of affairs which is to be shared and pursued by everyone. It is that state that would obtain were these rules universally followed and is usually described as a condition in which each person's freedom is as extensive as both justice and security permits. This means that differences and disunities among men can be permitted only if they do not threaten the basic rights of others. What will be emphasized are person's negative obligations and there will be rational agreement on what ought not to occur or be allowed. Harmony will consist in that form of cooperation which is non-interference with the liberty of others. The sharing and pursuit of a common good in a deontological system is, therefore, indirect. Still, it is both present and morally central.

The promotion of harmony is thus a structural aspect of both utilitarian and deontological theories. And, while it is clear from the preceding dis-

cussion that love and friendship create a kind of disharmony and that this fact makes it likely that such theories cannot give an adequate moral account of these relationships, the incompatibility of the two must be clearly and definitely established. For this purpose, it is sufficient to consider two further points, both of which illustrate irreconcilable differences which make it impossible for utilitarianism and deontology to incorporate the moral features of love and friendship into their theories. The first is that love denies the moral centrality of both happiness and justice and the second is that it allows a positive moral significance to be given to certain lies and forms of deceit.

VI

Harmony itself is an indeterminate notion which must be given a substantive content if it is to play a role in a moral theory. This content provides the criterion of moral unity and cooperation in virtue of being something which everyone has a responsibility to promote. Disharmony then becomes identifiable as failure to accept it as the proper goal of one's actions. There are essentially two ways in which such a content can be determined. One is to specify a particular good or set of goods as objectively valuable. The other is to allow people to make their own determinations of value, but demand that these choices satisfy certain formal conditions. Utilitarianism is an example of the first sort of theory and its typical content is happiness, while deontology is an example of the second and its typical content is justice.

Love as a moral condition, however, has a quite different content and is only incidentally happy or just. In fact, it appears to be essentially unjust. What justice requires is that people be regarded as equal in moral value. This means that everyone's interest and welfare is entitled to the same consideration and that distinctions resulting in differential treatment cannot be introduced unless they are based on relevant moral differences and are applied universally and uniformly. Love cannot meet this requirement and, indeed, must do exactly what justice forbids. It is not merely that love must separate people into an "us" and a "them" which is to make them morally unequal and to make most people of less value simply because they are not loved. Nor is it only that this fact in turn provides reasons for treating those not loved in less favorable and even unfair ways. It is that this separation and creation of a difference in moral value is done apart from any reasons which could justify it. What reason is there to love one person rather than another and thereby make that person morally more valuable? Ordinarily none. There will be causes to explain the choice but not reasons to justify it and show that it is the best choice. It is a commonplace that people love those who are not "worthy" of that love, and in this sense, love is gratuitous and irrational.⁵

⁵ For a philosophical discussion of love, and support for this analysis, see Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, Part Two, "Love and Hatred" (Yale University Press; New Haven, 1954).

Indeed, how could love be governed by reasons like other choices and remain what it is? Love is partial and makes distinctions between persons who are otherwise similar and possess the same qualities and virtues. If one really loved one person rather than another because this and that quality made them the correct one to choose, one would have to love equally everyone who had those same qualities. This, of course, does not occur, nor can it if love is to separate the beloved from all others in the ways earlier described. Love is a choice that is personal and not universalizable, and it results in moral distinctions that are unfair because they are both arbitrary and discriminatory. Love does not recognize justice as morally central and hence the two are essentially incompatible.

Love also does not recognize happiness, that other great pole to justice in the modern moral geography. To be sure, happiness is involved in love, but secondarily; happiness is neither essential nor central. The value love has never rests on the value or presence of happiness. Instead, love (and friendship as well) is a structure of value which has as much to do with suffering, grief, sorrow, loneliness, and abandonment as it has to do with fulfillment, joy, satisfaction, and happiness. That is to say, love confers value upon these "negative" states in just the same way as it does on the "positive" ones connected with happiness – it makes all of them matter and gives all of them significance. Without love, these states would be equally meaningless. Indeed, nothing could be less utilitarian in nature than love, for on the utilitarian view happiness is exactly that condition which, from the moral perspective, is complete and not lacking in significance. Not so from the point of view of love; happiness without one's love is nothing, while love without happiness is still a great deal. As far as love is concerned, it is the value of happiness that rests on the value of love and not the other way around as the utilitarian would have it.

VII

The second moral aspect of love which, when joined with its non-universalizable and infelicitous content, makes it clear that it cannot be accorded an important moral role by utilitarian and deontological theories is the fact that love gives a different and more positive moral status to certain forms of lies and deceit. How this occurs has already been suggested in Sections 1-3, but the analyses there are subject to a line of objection that must be considered before the examples can have force.

It was argued in those sections that lying and deceit had a special role in the relationships of autonomy (which can be considered a form of self-love), friendship, and love, and that their moral character there could not be understood in purely utilitarian or deontological terms. The critic will reply that this is not so, at least as concerns the latter claim, and will maintain that deceit in these relationships is morally no different than it is elsewhere. On this view, any form of deceit is, in itself, morally wrong. If he is a utilitarian, this is because it always produces at least the bad consequences of dis-

appointed expectations and mistrust, and if he is a deontologist, because it always violates the right of others not to be used. Even so, he will allow that deceit is not always to be forbidden when everything is taken into account. This will be the case in precisely those situations where it is the lesser of two evils. Then it will be morally required either because it has better consequences than its alternatives, or because it insures a more important right than the one it violates. Therefore, what must be shown is that neither of these accounts applies to the lies and deceptions which constitute an integral part of the forms of love considered.

If we take the case of sharing a secret as an example, it soon becomes clear that utilitarian and deontological explanations fail to capture its moral structure. The breach of faith and the subsequent lies which cover it up do not, for instance, secure a more important right. Though there are moral bonds between the two friends or lovers, it would be a mistake to say that the one has a right to know the secret the other holds. This would suggest both that his claim is of the same sort as that of the first party who does have a right to have his confidences respected, and that the good embodied in it is one which can be generally shared, and neither of these is correct.

If the friend really did have a right to know, then not only his partner but the first party as well would have an obligation to tell him. Indeed, if this "right" were dominant, then he would have no excuse for not doing so. This is what happens in cases, such as those involving national security, where disclosure of secrets is justified on deontological grounds; then, there is no question that all parties have an ultimate and equal obligation to reveal the needed information. But this is not the case when secrets come between friends and lovers, and the reason is that love is a disharmonious relationship which creates a kind of moral good that is not generally shareable. As a consequence, it cannot form the basis of a system of rights and obligations which cuts across the bonds formed by affection and does not respect the division between "us" and "them."

Nor does sharing secrets in this situation necessarily promote the general welfare or produce better results than any of its alternatives. Such deceit may indeed have this effect, but it need not. The moral ends appealed to by friends and by utilitarians are different, and one can readily imagine situations where they will conflict. When this happens, utilitarianism will be unable to account for the moral value of breaking one's word and revealing a secret, for that action will fail to produce the best consequences when measured in terms of general happiness (or some other public end), yet it will still be morally required as a result of friendship and love.

The outcome of all this is that some lies and deceptions have a positive moral value which cannot be analyzed as due merely to the fact that they are the lesser of two evils, at least as that notion is understood by utilitarians and deontologists. Such actions are instead the expression of a quite different structure of value, and are essential to both its being established and maintained. Being able to lie, and even lying itself, are indispensable elements of moral autonomy, friendship, and love. It would be inaccurate to speak of

them as “means” to these relationships, for that implies that they are extrinsic and not a part of them. But this is not so. The essential character of these moral relationships includes the separation of persons into groups of “us” and “them,” and deceit is one of the forms this separation takes. This makes lies and deceptions morally significant, and indeed of positive moral value, in a way no utilitarian or deontological theory can explain.

VIII

The argument is complete. What has been established is that the requirements created by friendship and love, which will include lies, deceptions, and the sharing of secrets, are moral ones. Since this is so, they must be taken into account by any moral theory which pretends to be adequate and comprehensive, and which purports to be able to correctly tell a person what he ought to do. However, none of the leading contemporary positions, all of which are utilitarian or deontological in character, can do this because they include as essential elements of their structure the promotion of a condition of harmony and the ultimate sharing of a common good. Love and friendship, by contrast, bring about moral separations and a condition of disharmony among persons, and promote only a private, nonshareable good. All utilitarian and deontological theories are therefore inadequate.

What conclusions are to be drawn from this fact? This is a difficult problem and I can only make a few suggestions. It would be nice to have a new theory to replace the “old” utilitarian and deontological ones, but I have none and, I suspect, none is possible.

Even if morally inadequate, utilitarian and deontological theories cannot be simply abandoned. They include too much that is obviously correct and morally significant. Nor can they be modified to incorporate these new considerations without completely changing their natures; the differences in questions are too radical. Yet they cannot be left unaffected either. The moral considerations created by love and friendship must be recognized as at least coordinate with those of utility and justice. Therefore, an attempt must be made to account for all three elements together.

But such a project is not hopeful. Present theories, because they emphasize harmony and an ultimately common good, are social and public in character. Those aspects of morality that are personal and private are pushed aside and ignored, and find treatment only in literature. Love and friendship, on the other hand, create just exactly such personal and private moral values, and in doing so relegate public matters of utility and justice to a secondary position. No theory can emphasize both kinds of considerations, nor can they be held in a stable balance. One or the other will always tend to dominate. Furthermore, when they conflict, there is no procedure by which the issue can be settled. One will have to act according to those values one at the time finds most important.

The result is that, once the thesis of this paper is accepted, moral matters will become very messy, both theoretically and practically. Moral thinking

will lose its old center, which was the goal of harmony, and in its place find two competing centers. This, at least, will be the initial situation. Perhaps subsequent reflection will show that there is a conceptual unity that can be achieved.

Still, the inadequacies of utilitarian and deontological theories, and thus of contemporary moral philosophy itself, must be recognized in order that their onesided account of morality and their illegitimate domination of moral thinking can be avoided. This in itself will represent some advance in our theoretical understanding, even if it makes the possibility of a systematic and comprehensive account of morality even more difficult and unlikely.

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